

Many of us might be aware that we are home to two Coast Guard stations in Waukegan and Wilmette. I want to highlight the work of Chief Joel Pribek, his 22 active duty guardsmen, 9 reservists and 345 auxiliary members serving in Wilmette. In 1976, their predecessors saved my life.

We also should highlight CDR Andrew Meyer's helicopter team at Waukegan. Last year, "Air Station Chicago" launched out of Waukegan to save the passengers and crew of the MV FIN SEEKER which sank off Waukegan. Special thanks goes to LT McWilliams, LT Loeb, PO Petre and rescue swimmer Bemis for rescuing seven Americans from the frigid waters of Lake Michigan last May.

I personally thanked the Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen, for the Wilmette and Waukegan Coast Guard work when they appeared before my Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee today.